

The Republican.

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TO THE REPUBLICANS OF THE ISLAND OF
GREAT BRITAIN,

AND MORE PARTICULARLY TO THOSE OF THAT PART OF IT
CALLED SCOTLAND.

Dorchester Gaol, Sept. 8, Year 3,
of the Spanish Revolution.

CITIZENS,

IN addressing the Republicans of Scotland, I consider that I address the whole people of that country, save those who live, or wish to live, in idleness, by the taxes raised upon the industry of their neighbours. You, the Republicans of Scotland, have lately received what has been called a "Royal Visit," that is, the man who bears the title of King has gone from London to Edinburgh to ascertain the proportion of fools to the more sensible part of the Scottish people. It has been an experiment to discover the state of the influence, the gaudy trappings of royalty may still exercise on the minds of those who have never seen any thing of the kind in their own neighbourhood. It has been a trick to try the extent of the remaining power of Kingcraft.

It is of very little consequence how long it has been that the people of Scotland have been rid of the residential part of Kingcraft among them, or what number of royal visits have been made since James the VIth left them to ascend the Chair in England, it is enough that we know, that several generations have passed away in Scotland, without having a man to fill the office of King among them, to know that a country can exist and prosper without the aid of such a character. The late visit of the King to Scotland cannot fail to be of great importance, in instructing the body of Scotchmen as to the total inutility of such an office. It must have been extremely well-timed to have made a lasting impression upon the industrious part of the whole

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country, so prudent in the general management of their affairs, to see and hear of the great expence, the waste of time, the uproar, the accidents, and the trifling nature of the cause of the confusion which must have attended this "Royal Visit." They had begun to reason upon the inutility of the office, and the great expence of supporting it, before they were shewn the real thing, and had seen the practical part exhibited to their faces. Had the King's Ministers been wise, they would have allowed him to have gone on the Continent, to meet his brothers of the Holy Alliance, or any where rather than to Scotland. They could not have sent him any where so well calculated to lessen his consequence and to stir up a feeling against the utility of his character and office. Thousands of empty heads and vacant minds who had thought there was something supernatural in the thing, from the clamour that has been generally made about it, must have gone to their homes with the greater astonishment, that they had seen nothing more than a man, who neither cultivates his farm, nor his mind, nor adds a tittle to the general property of the country; but about whom an expence is incurred, and a waste of property is made, that would fill the bellies and clothe the backs of all the crippled, disabled, or aged persons in the country, who could not labour to support themselves. By this "Royal Visit," the industrious, the frugal, and the economical people of Scotland, have seen the manner in which industry is made to sustain the prey of idleness: and the GREAT FIRST CAUSE of the taxation that presses them to the ground, and prevents them from emerging from a condition that is little better than that of the cattle of the field, and in some instances worse. I advance nothing personal in this observation. The present individual who fills the office, deficient as he has been in moral character, is not a jot worse than the average run of kings. I see none on the continent of Europe that are preferable to him, and if we must keep one, I have no present wish to change, nor do I see any thing to be gained by a change of kings. A king certainly has the power, in such a country as this, at this moment, to make what changes he pleases for bettering the condition of the people; for he can choose his ministers from among any party that he pleases, and those ministers hold the means of filling the House of Commons to their liking; but the King knows well, his ministers know well, and every clear-headed man must see the same thing, that in the progress of change and improvement, the monarchy itself

would be one of the first things that must necessarily be removed: The Reform we want is a lessening of public expenditure, and the taxation that supports it, and whenever the time comes that that Reform can be carried into practice, it will be seen that the most useless of any part of the expenditure is that which supports the monarchy, for the monarchy is the centre and source of all pensions, all sinecures, all useless offices and institutions, all wars, and of every thing that has engendered unnecessary expenditure.

Mr. Canning, in his late farewell speech at Liverpool, was perfectly right in saying that he had never yet found the man who could argue the question of Reform with him, upon the ground of preserving all the present institutions of the country. No man can do it, and that speech was the completest cut the Moderate Reformers ever received. By it they may see that they have no alternative but to retire among the ranks of Corruption's host, or to advance and join the Republicans. They are hypocrites and deluders to remain where they are. He (Mr. Canning) well said, that to reform the House of Commons without reforming the House of Lords would be nugatory. He knows well, and we all know well, that to reform the House of Commons would be a means of reforming the House of Lords: but he attacks the Moderate Reformer upon this ground:—
"You profess to admire the form of Government; the three Estates of King, Lords, and Commons; now if I can show you that your desired Reform of the House of Commons will inevitably lead to a change or abolition of the other two Estates, I drive you from the position you have taken, and leave you no alternative but to avow a support in full of the present system, or to avow yourselves Republicans."

Those who cant about Moderate Reform, about the British Constitution, or a desire to preserve the Monarchy and Aristocracy in all their present assumed privileges, are the most inconsistent of beings to talk about Reform; and to such men Mr. Canning has well applied his lash. Not a man of them will venture to answer him upon the point he has taken; they cannot do it, without making greater fools and hypocrites of themselves than hitherto. I read Mr. Canning's speech on this subject with great pleasure, as I saw in a moment that it would be productive of great good in forwarding the cause of Republicanism; I saw that he had disarmed the whole of his enemies excepting the avowed Republicans.

There is now no alternative for the Moderate Reformer but to advance to an avowal of Republican principles, or to prove himself corrupt by falling back to the support of Mr. Canning and his system of King, Lords, and Commons, as at present constituted. I do not praise this speech generally. It is extremely frothy and corrupt, and lame in its conclusions on many points. Was it not for the point I have before mentioned, was it not for his tacit admission that a Republican form of Government was preferable to a Monarchy, he would have laid himself open to a general attack from the Whigs and Moderate Reformers, but he has saved himself by a few pertinent questions which he knows they cannot answer. It remains to be seen whether they will attack him on minor points, and pass over that which most applies to them. The Morning Chronicle has thrown out an obscure hint, by way of reply, that the House of Lords may be advantageously dispensed with, upon the authority of Bentham and Franklin, but it has skulked from any thing like an answer. Mr. Cobbett has promised an answer; I have not seen it at the time of writing this, but I hope he will not pass over this main feature of Mr. Canning's speech—*whether it be possible to preserve the House of Lords with a Reformed House of Commons?*

Since writing the foregoing, I have received a copy of the Liverpool Courier of September the 4th; sent, I presume, from its place of publication, under the frank of George Canning, M. P. I receive it as a sort of challenge, as it contains nothing interesting to me beyond a better report of Mr. Canning's speech than I have seen in the Morning Chronicle, and the Editor's observations upon it. Why I conceive it to be a sort of challenge, in this instance, is that I have never seen a copy of this paper before out of the London Coffee-Houses, where it is filed; and I can consider the motive of sending it to me to be nothing short of a matter of exultation on the part of the sender. The Editor, in his comment on the farewell dinner to Mr. Canning, seems to chuckle over the fallacious notion "that whatever progress the desolating principles of Radical Reform may make among the *mob*, they make none among the people." He shall be shewn the contrary, and be shewn that they desolate nothing but corruption.

I wait, as I before said, with anxiety to see how the men who call themselves Moderate or Radical Reformers, and at the same time profess to be admirers of the British Constitution, will reply to Mr. Canning. Reply they must, or

be shamed into silence. He has ridded himself of all honest antagonists except it be the Republicans, and with them he acknowledges he has no wish to cope. But cope he must with them, for they are now in the field that was lately occupied by the clamourers about Moderate Reform. If he remains in this country, as a member of the Cabinet or of the House of Commons, I, as an avowed Republican, shall take up the cudgels against him; and I will not go farther back with him than his farewell speech at Liverpool. The thing is now coming to a point. The struggle will end between the Republicans and the Monarchists. All the prattle that has passed hitherto about Reform in this country has been delusion and hypocrisy. There has been no honesty nor honest intention in it. It is now beginning to assume its proper character. Serious attacks are now making upon both Kingcraft and Priestcraft on all sides. The Church is now *really* in danger. The Monarchy is now *really* in danger. The corrupt Aristocracy is now *really* in danger. These are dangerous times with all parties; for some of the good, as well as the bad, must expect to fall in such a struggle. The people are sure to triumph, but it depends upon themselves whether that triumph shall be gained without a serious loss on their side: it depends upon them whether they will or will not crush all opposition with a breath, or whether they will continue to dally with their enemies at a great loss and expence on their own side. Every thing depends upon themselves. The mask of hypocrisy and delusion must be thrown off: they must combat as Republicans, or live as slaves; and what is worst of all, *slaves who prattle about liberty*. In taking my hour's walk the other day within the walls of this Gaol, the men at the Tread-mill, to cheer their spirits against the fatiguing effects of their compulsory exertions, were singing lustily, "Britons never shall be slaves?" The thing struck me forcibly as being a characteristic of the general conduct of Britons; for whilst more than any other people they boast of liberty and free births, they are the greatest slaves on the face of the earth! They have never yet been free from this mental delusion. They have opened their eyes one and one at a time, until the number is now getting to some head; and I flatter myself that Mr. Canning's speech will operate upon them just as the circulation of so many copies of the "Rights of Man" would have done. He has declared that all real Reform must end in getting rid of the Monarchy and the House of Lords. He is perfectly correct in this

conclusion. The question is therefore reduced to this point: Will the Reformers, will the suffering Farmers sit down under their present evils, rather than get rid of those two corruptions, those two blurs upon civilization and free Government? They have no other choice. Monarchy and distress, and Aristocracy and degraded humiliation, or a free Government founded on a Representative Legislature, and an Elective Magistracy, awaits them. Let them look to it: let them cringe, crawl, and suffer, or stand forth with energy, and be free, prosperous and happy.

Republicans of Scotland, we have, as yet, in England no particulars, no truth as to the real reception you have given the King on his late visit. That the reception was totally unlike that he received from the people of Ireland, is evident from the hints that have been thrown out upon the matter. That you have a corrupt knot of courtiers in your country is certain, for however they may be detested by the bulk of a nation, there will always be such creatures where there is a Monarchy and a Court. They are the scum of the body politic, and, like all other scums, float on the surface and are most visible; so that without moving it you would think the whole body was of the same foul nature.

The visit of the King to your capital can have appeared to you as nothing but a drama, an exhibition of past scenes upon the stage. There was nothing real in the Highland scenes, in the gathering clans, the archers with their bows and arrows, or the shields and muckle hangers of the mimic warrior. You must have seen that the only valued body-guards were the ARMED DRAGOONS. There was no reliance in your once trusty Highlanders. The scene was every where clogged with this suspicious looking appendage. Whether the attendance was to a dinner or a ball, ARMED DRAGOONS were necessary guards. The King was not a Scotchman: he and you both felt it, and all that can be said of his visit is that he played a distinguished part in the representation of ancient scenery and times gone by. The King has not told you that he was a Scotchman or that he had a Scottish heart! He knew the expression would be treated with contempt. He was last year both an Irishman and a Hanoverian, for there he found kindred souls and stupid frantic dolts; but the grave and reflecting demeanour of Scotchmen alarmed him, terrified him. He never quits his house in England without trembling for his life. He has no confidence in the inhabitants of any parish throughout

this country, and he evidently entered Edinburgh under similar impressions. He begged your cheers, and had almost fainted for the want of them! But the expence; think of the expence of keeping such an actor.

R. CARLILE.

.TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

Edinburgh, August 30, in the year 1822

SIR,

of the Carpenter's Wife's Son.

I HAVE read over with attention all the numbers of your Republican that have come to this city, and I am well pleased, indeed, with the spirit of the publication. Your exposition of corrupt Christian Judges, and bigoted Juries requires thanks from every independent man. Mr. Denman's conduct on the Trial of Humphrey Boyle was ridiculous in the extreme, but it will shew the people what they may expect from the Whigs. Both Whigs and Tories seem to agree in the persecution of Republicans; and by their stupid adherence to old precedents, they would no doubt have us believe that man is incapable of improvement, in matters that are most intimately connected with his happiness; or, in politics and theology. But I anticipate the fast approach of a crisis which will banish for ever all such unmanly opinions.

If men are anxious for improvement in all things, it is our bounden duty to discuss all subjects freely before we give implicit faith to the opinions of others, whether ancient or modern: and once the freedom of discussion is completely established, neither Whig nor Tory rulers, nor corrupt Christian Judges, nor bigoted Juries, will long be able to seize their property, and send to dungeons, men who are the advocates of GENUINE Reform. Then will the system of old precedents, and the barbarous idolatry of the Christians, fly like chaff before the wind: they will no doubt pass away, and succeeding generations will be astonished that intelligent men believed in such absurdities. In all the changes from one idolatry to another which have taken place in the world, still genuine morality is the same, and has never been changed, it can support itself independent of idolatry of any kind: but religion, I should have said idolatry, of every kind, is obliged to it for support; and even in the absurd system of Christianity, there are scattered here and there a few moral maxims, which are its sole support. It is only by the good precepts that are mixed up with any mythology that follies and bad practices are always excused; but let them be separated by free discussion, and the useless stuff will fall to the ground, but the moral part will be the same, though divested of all religion.

when we are told by Christian
divines that Jesus is the son of God =

= = of God, and was begotten by the Holy Ghost, and that the Holy Ghost proceeds from both the Father and the Son, what are we to think of such a complicated mass of confusion and absurdities? If the overshadowing of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost begat Jesus, how, in the name of common sense, is it possible that the Holy Ghost could proceed from God and Jesus, or be begotten between them? The abominable behaviour of the Bishop of Clogher and his college is something similar, and for aught we know, the Holy Christian Bishop and his Christian comrade imagined that they were only imitating their Gods, which of course they would consider no fault, but probably thought they would produce some kind of a being; though not so holy as the Holy Ghost. Those who take upon them to assert that the moving principle in Nature is a masculine being, and distinct from it, and possessed of every good quality, do certainly vilify his character by imputing to him such filthy and obscene actions. And not only will the Christians have him to damn us for ever, for not believing that he is an abstract being, separated and distinct from Nature, but because we will not also believe all their other absurd and obscene stories. They make dogmatical assertions, for which they have no proof whatever, and then they persecute, and will have their God to damn all freethinkers because they will not believe them.

When any person makes an assertion, it is certainly his duty to prove that assertion, by some means or other, before he can expect rational men to believe it. The Christians, then, should prove that their God is a being independent of Nature, and abstracted from it; and also that he has performed all the vicious and obscene actions which they have laid on his name, before they expect us to believe them. All men agree about things that are natural and cognizable by their senses, but the moment they make one step beyond what their senses can comprehend, they immediately fall into confusion and disagreement.

Age after age have mankind been gulled with religious fables of Gods and their transactions, and the poorer classes have not much time to reflect upon these fables, and the gay and the fashionable consider them beneath their attention; thus have their deceivers been enabled to carry on their deceptions. But I hope the time is fast approaching when priests will only be talked of with that contempt which they so justly deserve.

How anxious are the Christians to get missionaries sent abroad to subvert and change the religions of other nations of the world! and how apprehensive are they of any enquiry concerning their own! I have heard a great many who pretend to be Reformers say, that religious opinions should not be mixed up with political discussions, because, say they, once civil liberty is obtained, there is no fear but religious liberty will follow as a consequence; but in my humble opinion, that is rather a hasty conclusion. Have not all the Republican nations of America obtained civil liberty to a very great extent, yet they have not obtained any thing

like religious liberty. Their established church, their hosts of priests, must be supported and maintained at the public expense. Here, then, is civil liberty, without religious liberty as a consequence; and I have little doubt but these drones of priests will, at some period or other, ruin the civil liberty of those countries. Since the Christians have made their religion a political engine, and on all occasions mix up their Church and State together, have not we Republicans and Deists good reason to expose the folly and expence of both? It would certainly be a hard case indeed, to saddle us with a part of the expense of their Church and State, and not allow us to express our opinions concerning them. I, for my own part, have no hesitation in saying, that it is my opinion that the exposure of all kinds of idolatry and mythology must precede, or at least, go hand in hand with a genuine Reformation in politics: and so long as the Christians keep grinding us with taxes and tithes, and thundering their holy anathemas against us, for our want of belief in revealed religion, it certainly becomes our duty to retaliate by exposing the folly, expence, and absurdity of their systems.

The proceedings of Republicans and Freethinkers should all be openly avowed, and firmly persevered in; we should have no hidden meetings, no private sayings on public affairs; no transactions that we dare not avow before the face of any man. Let it fall to the lot of Christians to act as hypocrites. It shall ever be my pride to advocate Republicanism and free discussion on all subjects, when and wherever it is necessary, because they appear to me to be the only means by which mankind will arrive at all the comfort and happiness which, constituted as they are by nature, they will ever be able to obtain. But if free discussion and experience proves any other plan to be more true and conducive to happiness, then will I, with pleasure, relinquish my present opinions, and adopt the better.

Many of the Christians of the present day are guilty of denying parts of their own *holy* books, and if they have not been tried for blasphemy, it must be because they connive at the faults of one another. I have heard many of them say, that there is not, nor ever was, such a being as the Devil. Now we are expressly told by their *inspired* writings that the Son of God, *alias Jesus the Jew*, had sometimes occasion to drive devils out of human beings, and he also publicly sent them away out of the possessed, and at one time granted their request to enter a herd of swine, so that not one of his followers, nor even the pharisees themselves, seemed to doubt their existence. It was even said by Jesus himself, that "other men cast out devils in the name of Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils:" now how can any Christians take upon themselves to deny the existence of the Devil? But I am glad to hear them to go that length, because, if the personification of evil is denied to be a distinct being from evil, so may the personification of good be denied to be a distinct being from God. We have just as much proof of the existence of the Devil as of God; and now that some of the Christians have opened one eye, and perceived that there is no such thing as an

evil being distinct and separated from Nature, I hope they will also be induced to open the other eye, and then they will perceive that neither is there such a thing as a good being separated and distinct from Nature. It is the belief in these two abstract beings that has formed the foundation for all kinds of mythology and idolatry.

It appears to me very curious indeed, how rational men can be persuaded that God who is said to be a spirit, which in theology means nothing, could produce a gross and material universe. In all cases, there must be a similarity and relation between the cause and effect; therefore, if God produced the universe, there must be some similarity and relation between him and it, even the most gross and uncouth parts, as well as the fine and beautiful. If God was not possessed of the nature and qualities of all things and beings in the universe, he could not have produced them: how could a fine and pure spirit produce gross matter out of nothing? Let Christians answer that.

Give me leave to congratulate you on your manly firmness and perseverance; to you, and such as you, are mankind indebted for causing them to think on their degraded and enslaved state; and I have no doubt that your exertions will be a great means of promoting their happiness. If Freethinkers will once unite, as a body, to assert the right of free discussion, soon would they be able to wrench off their chains, and hurl them at the heads of their deceivers and oppressors.

Much gratitude is due from us to Professor Lawrence, for his Lectures: as a gentleman of education ought to do, he has stepped forward to expose idolatry and superstition in a scientific manner. A few scientific gentlemen like him, acting in a similar manner, would soon tear asunder the veil of corruption, and exhibit it in its horrible shape.

You have expressed a hope that our Zetetic Society is going on with spirit; I am happy to inform you that it is the case, and even beyond our expectations. We have already caused some men to see their former errors, and a good number attend us; indeed, our hall is filled every Sunday, and we have very few meetings that are not honoured with the company of females; such a plan of enquiry is both attractive and edifying. I am happy to learn, by your Republican, that there is a Society of the same kind commenced in London; it would give us much pleasure indeed to correspond with them.

I have enclosed you a One Pound Note, which Mr. David Leitch received from a few of his acquaintances, and gave to me to remit to you, as a small testimony of their approbation of your conduct.

With my best respects for you and your family, consider me,

Dear Sir, your sincere Friend,

JAMES AFFLECK.

P. S. You will soon have your precious treasure, the King, in London again; he left this city yesterday. The Whig ladies here seem to have forgotten his wife.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

Clapham, August, in the year 1822
of the Christian Mythology.

SIR,

A FEW Friends to Civil and Religious Liberty (inhabitants of Clapham) beg your acceptance of the enclosed trifle, as a small token of gratitude for the benefits derived from the perusal of your invaluable publications, which they may truly say have been the means of bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light.

The sun of Truth illumines our mental horizon; its effulgent beams have pierced each sombre cavity of our minds, where Superstition and Bigotry were wont to hold their empire, and ruled with despotic sway over our passions; checking each generous impulse, making us slaves to terrors, which REASON has since fully proved to be only as many chimeras existing only in the disordered brains of fanatics:

“A cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving men,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontroll'd above their betters.”

Proceed, Sir, in your glorious career; still continue to publish—ours be the duty to disseminate your works. Mankind, alas! have been too long buried in ignorance and idolatry. The dogmas they have imbibed from their infancy they seem willing to retain: bigotry so strongly fetters all their faculties, that it is with the utmost difficulty they can be persuaded of their right to investigate those doctrines they have so long believed emanated from the Deity. Besides, the Priest stands in array, ready to hurl damnation on the heads of those who should dare doubt the truth of those Theological Romances, by which he is enabled to riot in luxury and debauchery.

Free discussion is the only means of attaining truth. Of this our enemies are well aware, knowing the fabric they have erected will crumble into dust whenever its merits or demerits are freely examined.

The Deist invites a scrutiny into his professions, and gains an accession of numbers from the investigation of his tenets. If Christianity possesses such superiority over every other species of belief, its analysis would not only confirm those who have adopted it, but must annihilate all opposition. But the supporters of Christianity have more faith in the MIGHTY power of the Law to crush opposers than they have in the boasted omnipotence of their THREE IN ONE DEITY, to preserve what they pretend he established.

All the respect the most zealous Christian could entertain for the Religion of his forefathers I myself possessed before your Trial, and the subsequent Prosecutions which were so malignantly carried on

against those who were bold enough to advocate your principles. Such heavy judgments upon the alleged offenders caused me to enquire into "the front of their offending." But what was my surprise when, instead of discovering any thing in your publications which tended to demoralize mankind, and to bring you under the displeasure of Almighty God, I found you endeavouring to rescue the Divinity from the obloquy which had been cast upon his name! A ray of light broke in upon my mind: I began to doubt; my curiosity was raised, I was anxious to see the "Age of Reason," that book which I had heard cried down, as containing all that is vile, infamous, and immoral. And I assure you, Sir, however ridiculous it may appear to you, when I sat down to the perusal of it my mind was so besotted by superstition that I should not have been surprised to have beheld the Bible (which I also had before me for the purpose of referring to the quotations made by Mr. Paine) I say it would not have excited my wonder, to have seen the HOLY BOOK assume the character of Aaron's rod, and swallow up the "Age of Reason" as I would an oyster! or, as a punishment for my temerity, to have received a visit from his Satanic Majesty *in propria persona*, and to have been whisked off to Tartarus in a flash of fire with which he had provided himself from the "regions below!"

Who is there, educated as I was, within the narrow limits of Methodism, and giving credence to all those idle tales of awful judgments and providential interferences with which the pages of the Methodists' Magazine abound, but would have fancied some similar occurrence would have taken place? However, I got through the work without bodily injury, but hope my mental faculties were improved. The mists which superstition had placed before my eyes gradually dispersed, and I began to discover beauties where all before appeared barren. As to the jaundiced eye each object appears of the same colour, so the "mind's eye" of the superstitious man is incapable of discerning with any degree of accuracy whatever may pass under his observation. To every effect he attributes the self-same supernatural cause, which forms the focus of his enquiries.

Let Christians boast of the happiness derived from religion! What! can the reflection of a wife, parent, or child, being doomed to eternal damnation bestow happiness? Is it not rather calculated to "harrow up the soul and freeze the blood?" Few Christians but have relatives or friends deceased, of whose future welfare they are doubtful, and will not such appalling thoughts intrude upon their happiest hours? Christians! who are thus situated, say, are ye happy? Can ye answer in the affirmative? Impossible! Away, then, with the illusion. Let those who would possess happiness endeavour to deserve it by a conscientious discharge of their moral duties, by meliorating the condition of their fellow man, and by discarding superstition from their breasts as the chief obstruction to its attainment.

You, Sir, have taken upon yourself the Herculean task of dethroning the hag Superstition, the greatness of the undertaking, I know,

will act as a stimulus to your exertions, you need "no spur to prick the side of your intent" except the consciousness of the rectitude of your conduct. Bear in mind, Sir, difficulties, however great, vanish before perseverance, and you may live to witness her downfall; to behold her last convulsive struggle. This is a "consummation devoutly to be wished" by all who have the true welfare of their country at heart. You have already pierced her; her invulnerability you have proved to be fabulous, and only "a weak invention of the enemy." Persevere then, Sir, in your laudable undertaking, you gain "advantage-ground" in each encounter; the Witch, knowing her weakness, seeks the alliance of Judge Bailey and Co., by whose art (the law) she hopes to destroy her opponents; but while your darts are pointed with TRUTH, and thrown by the unerring arm of REASON, you must ultimately triumph.

The means now used by our enemies to prevent enquiry, so far from having the desired effect, naturally causes an investigation into our professions which cannot fail of making converts of all unprejudiced minds—they are therefore your coadjutors, however contrary it may be to their inclinations.

The courage you have displayed in detecting error; and the ardour you have shown in defence of our principles, justly entitles you to the appellation of the CHAMPION OF TRUTH, a name more truly honourable than the glittering unmeaning titles of all the aristocratical or crowned despots in the world.

You will perceive, Sir, our number is but very small, you will not be surprised when I inform you the name by which our village is generally known, is that of religious, you are most probably acquainted with it—if not the description is sufficient. If our means, Sir, were equal to our will each shilling should have been a pound; the apology we offer for the smallness of this contribution, shall be another subscription as soon as possible.

And now, Sir, I conclude, and in the name of the Subscribers most heartily wish you, your excellent wife, and amiable sister, health, and all the happiness incarcerated virtue can receive from the consciousness of having acted well your parts, and deserved the approbation of all good men—that you may speedily be restored to liberty—that you may live to see ample justice (not law) done upon your unmerciful Christian-like persecutors, and receive the reward you have so nobly earned, and justly merited, from a generous and free people,

I remain, in behalf of the whole,

Your Friend and Fellow-Citizen,

T. BOWDEN.

P. S. You will have the goodness to notice the receipt of this for the satisfaction of the Subscribers.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
T. Bowden	3	0	E. O.	3	0
W. H. sen.	2	0	James Blackall	3	0
J. C. H.	1	0	Mary Blackall	2	0
W. H.	1	0			

TO MR. T. BOWDEN, CLAPHAM.

SIR,

Dorchester Gaol, September 3, 1822.

I RETURN thanks to you and friends at Clapham for the sums they have subscribed towards my fines, and am much pleased with the sentiments with which you have accompanied them. Your communication is my first knowledge of having any friends in your neighbourhood; but I shall now hope for an increase in their numbers. You have spoken out honestly and manfully upon your change of opinions, and if all our fellow-countrymen could muster the same resolution, our progress would be most rapid. The Priests and their supporters pride themselves on their power and influence to keep their more enlightened neighbours in awe and silence by threats of commercial and other injuries, so that it requires more than ordinary resolution and independence of mind to stand up against them, particularly in such a district as yours. I uniformly find that a few determined and intelligent men are sufficient to make an impression on a whole parish, particularly if they are known to be as moral as intelligent. No doctrines can make a useful change of opinions unless they are accompanied with morality. The Priests say, that morality is inseparable from religion, though they are horridly deficient in the practical part of the matter; it is therefore of the greatest importance that we should exhibit genuine morality with our renunciation of their craft.

I see you have broken through the meshes of the sect called Methodists, in a manner that must leave you solid mental happiness. This sect of Priests and dupes have vainly fancied that their tenets and actions were invulnerable, and that a sheep could neither stray or be stolen from their folds: but I am happy to say that some hundred instances have come within my knowledge of similar cases to yours. They boast of increasing numbers:—it is very possible, as they are more likely to make an impression on an illiterate mind than the philosophical Deist. We shall continue to draw the more intelligent part of their members from them, as in your case and that of many others. In the absence of a general education I can perceive that the present state of Priestcraft is not without some advantages. A system of

education, or a teaching of the rudiments of reading, writing, arithmetic, &c., has of late spread abroad with it which cannot fail to be of great service in human amelioration. In fact, knowledge must be the ground-work of all amelioration; for Priestcraft will only recede as that advances. I would desire nothing more than to put a copy of "The Age of Reason" into the hands of every man who can read and understand the Bible. I would be content to let it operate upon him without any explanations, or scientific enforcement of its doctrines, leaving the priest to oppose it as much as he pleased. This glorious work is circulating with more rapidity than ever. I shall circulate more copies in 1822 than I did in 1819.

With respects to all present friends in Clapham I conclude with hoping their numbers will increase, and remain their devoted servant in the cause of annihilating idolatry,

R. CARLILE.

FOR THE REPUBLICAN.

It is an astonishing fact, that no less than £296,468 have been collected during the last year, for the purpose of disseminating fictions, under the specious name of religious truth! Of this sum, £103,802 has been gathered by the British and Foreign Bible Society; £50,822 by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; £26,883 for Methodist Missions, and the remainder for other superstitious purposes. Would it not be well if the votaries of truth could form societies for the purpose of propagating their principles? Any man who has been enslaved by superstition, and has shaken off its pestiferous influence, feels the value of truth, and is anxious for others to enjoy the comfort he feels at being set free from delusion. Would it not be productive of good, to put a copy of "The Age of Reason" into the hands of every man that could read it? When we see the activity of the friends to a system of delusion, it ought to set us on the alert to counteract their designs. That something of this kind may be done is the earnest desire of

A NEW CONVERT TO MATERIALISM.

FOR THE REPUBLICAN.

SELF-DESTRUCTION committed by Lord Cut-throat Castlereagh has prevented the slow hand of justice from overtaking him and avenging the cause of outraged humanity. He has passed the "bourne from whence no traveller returns" without atoning to the fatherless and widows for his cruelty and his despotism; his duplicity to Bond, and Byrne, and O'Connor, and Emmet, and M'Nevin, and a hundred more state prisoners in Ireland, is scarcely equalled by state perfidy in any country; and not atoned for by all the tortures and cruelties he had inflicted at the Old Custom House, Sandy's Prevat, Beresford's Riding House, and at the Royal Exchange, where human blood followed the most refined torture, when every town and village were made scenes of torture and of blood-shed by this Cut-throat, he has not atoned for. Whatever human torture ingenuity could contrive for the purpose of extorting confession, this base, this perfidious, this cowardly ruffian had put in requisition. Bereft of all the finer feelings of the human mind he delighted in nothing so much as daily executions, and the heart-rending shrieks of the flogged, the racked, the picketted, and such as were writhing under the actual cautery. My Lord Cut-throat manifested constant duplicity towards my Lords Clare and Cornwallis. Under this infamous rule no good man was safe: villainy alone was sacred; in every family, in every society, he sowed disunion, treachery, and distrust; he allied himself with spies and informers, and they only were his friends. The Septembrizing fame of Robespierre would wane before my Lord Cut-throat's if the latter had been as well known as the former; entertaining the most implacable hatred to liberty, his object was to exterminate all who espoused the cause, this tyrant wished to destroy every vestige of it.

The late rejoicings at the death of this sanguinary tyrant have proved how much a brave and generous people have detested him. From one end of the kingdom to the other, at his death, there was a spontaneous burst of joy, of cheers, of ringing bells and festivals. The Irish Robespierre, the Irish Nero, or Paddy's Caligula vibrated every tongue, except those of the villains who have associated with him in rapine, in perfidy, in espionage. The villain was haunted by what are vulgarly termed "blue devils"; his turpitude made him suspect he was beset, with phantoms and spectres, and with the ghosts of the innocent whose destruction he had effected; he could not set spies, he could not effect the destruction of that principle of the human mind called recollection; he could not *pack a jury to try his own conscience*, and on every impartial trial of himself, a verdict of Guilty was returned. His conscience told him he deserved execution, it told he was guilty of the foulest crimes of any unpunished

man; and what the law had not power to do, as an act of justice to an oppressed, insulted, and outraged people, he did with his own hand.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

SIR,

Chester Castle, September 2, 1822.

YESTERDAY I received a letter dated August 22, from "An Enemy to Persecution," containing £1, for which I beg leave to return my kindest acknowledgments in your Republican. I trust the time is not far distant when the petty tyrants of Cheshire will be brought to justice for their tyranny. Castlereagh has become his own destroyer by cutting his own throat, and if the qualms of conscience do not goad others to act in a similar manner I will promise them that I will never rest till I have obtained retribution for the abuses heaped upon me and my family. I make no doubt that if a proper investigation was to take place, but some of them would be as liable to lose their places as those of Somersetshire: for they are no other than they who took an active part at Manchester on the 16th of August 1819. But what am I talking of? The Chairman, Trafford Trafford, who passed sentence upon me, was, I believe, at the massacre, at the head of the Cheshire Yeomanry: so what can we expect of the rest whilst such a man continues to act as Chairman at the Quarter Sessions for the county? But, I hope, by the spreading of knowledge, even-handed justice will bring tyrants low and put the people of England in possession of their just and equal rights. So I remain, with my best respects to all true-hearted citizens, a sincere friend to the Rights of Man.

JOSEPH SWANN.

SCRIPTURE CONTRADICTIONS.

(Concluded from p. 430.)

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| A woman, a Canaanite. Matt. xv. 22. | A Syrophenician, a Greek. Mark vii. 26. |
| After six days. Matt. xvii. 1. | About eight days after. Luke ix. 28. |
| Behold two blind men. Matt. xx. 30. | One blind man. Luke xviii. 35. |
| Call no man father. Matt. xxiii. 9. | I write to you, fathers. 1 John ii. 13. |
| Prepared from the beginning. Matt. xxv. 24. | I go to prepare. John xiv. 2. |
| Two days before the passover. Matt. xxvi. 1. | Six days before the passover. John xii. 1. |
| Spoken by Jeremiah. Matt. xxvii. 9. | Spoken by Zechariah. Zech. xi. 13. |
| The Thieves. Matt. xxvii. 44. | One thief. Luke xxiii. 39. |

Crucified the third hour. Mark xv. 25.

They came to the sepulchre at sunrise. Mark xvi. 2.

One young man sitting on the right side. Mark xvi. 5.

Salute no man. Luke x. 4.

Blessed the eyes that see what you see. Luke x. 23.

Beginning from Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 47.

I take no man's testimony. John v. 34.

I bear no record of myself. John v. 31.

Labour not for meat that perishes. John vi. 27.

Moses gave not that bread. John vi. 32.

The world cannot hate you. John vii. 7.

I and my father are one. John x. 50.

Lay down my life for my friends. John xv. 13.

Not lawful for us to put any man to death. John xviii. 31.

Touch me not. John xx. 17.

'Tis not for you to know the seasons. Act i. 7.

I go bound in spirit to Jerusalem. Acts xx. 22.

God gave them up to vile affections. Rom. i. 26.

Nothing can separate me from Christ. Rom. viii. 39.

One esteems a day, &c. let every man, &c. Rom. xiv. 5.

Epenetus the first of Achaia. Rom. xvi. 5.

I write not these things to shame you. 1 Cor. iv. 14.

Be ye not servants of men. 1 Cor. vii. 23.

Bear one another's burdens. Gal. vi. 2.

Women to pray and prophecy covered. 1 Cor. xi. 5.

You are no more strangers. Eph. ii. 19.

Let him that stole steal no more. Eph. iv. 28.

The Lord is at hand. Phil. iv. 5.

We shall be ever with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 17.

Appointed that all men to die. Heb. ix. 27.

The sixth hour and darkness, &c. Luke xxiii. 44.

While it was yet dark. John xx. 1.

Two angels, one at the head and the other at the feet. John x. 12.

Salute Urbane. Rom. xvi. 9.

Blessed they that have not seen. John xx. 29.

Began from Galilee. Acts x. 37.

You are my witnesses. John xv. 27.

I bear record of myself. John viii. 14.

He that works must eat. 2 Thess. iii. 10.

You did eat the same. 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

The world hateth you. John xv. 19.

My Father, greater than I. John xiv. 28.

For his enemies. Rom. v. 10.

We have a law, and by our law he ought to die. John xix. 7.

Feel me. John xx. 27.

Of times and seasons, brethren, I would not have you be ignorant. 1 Thess. v. 1.

The spirit saith he shall not go. Acts xxi. 4.

Lust of the flesh, &c. not of the Father. 1 John ii. 16.

I wish myself cursed from him. Rom. ix. 3.

Ye observe days, I am afraid of you. Gal. iv. 10, 11.

Stephanas, the first fruits of Achaia. 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

I speak to shame you. 1 Cor. vi. 5.

Servants obey your masters. Eph. vi. 5.

Every man must bear his own burden. Gal. vi. 5.

Let your women be silent. 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

I beseech you as strangers. 1 Peter ii. 11.

Let him that is unjust be unjust still. Rev. xxii. 11.

Let no man deceive you its not at hand. 2 Thess. ii. 2.

Reign with him one thousand years. Rev. xx. 6.

Enoch should not see death. Heb. xi. 5.

They obtained the promise. Heb. xi. 33.	They obtained not the promise. Heb. xi. 39.
Once more I shake heaven. Heb. xii. 26.	We receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Heb. xii. 28.
All things are become new. Rev. xxi. 5.	No new thing. Eccles. i. 9.

Which is most probable, that the Scriptures should be a human invention, or that the Almighty should dictate such contradictions?

ISRAEL VINDICATED.

(Continued from p. 477.)

LETTER VIII.

Perpetuity of the Jewish nation—Interesting Problems.

DEAR ISAACS,

THE Nazarenes, who pretend that God has cast off our nation, and that we are no longer the chosen race, do not seem aware, that they thereby impeach the veracity of Jehovah, and furnish the adversaries of the truth with weapons to attack revealed religion. In the whole range of our sacred books, there is not an article of faith more clearly laid down than the perpetuity of our nation, our law, and our observances, enjoined by the Almighty.

In our book of Genesis*, where it is said that the posterity of Abraham were to be distinguished from all other nations by circumcision, this is declared to be "an everlasting covenant," to be observed by his posterity "through all their generations." The condition of this was, that God promised to Abraham, and his posterity, the perpetual possession of the holy land, and such privileges as were implied in being their God. When the feast of the Passover was ordained, it was to be kept "as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast, by an ordinance for ever†."

As to the Sabbath, its observance was never to cease. "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever‡." In

* Gen. xvii.

† Exod. xii. 14, 48.

‡ Ex. xxxi. 16.

like manner, the priesthood were to be chosen out of the family of Aaron, as long as the Israelites should be a nation*; and the feast of Tabernacles was ordained to be "a statute for ever in your generations†."

Even, dear Isaacs, when Jehovah, foreseeing that our forefathers would become disobedient to his law, and be driven out of the promised land as a punishment for their crimes; even in that case, he promised not to forsake them, but to bring them out of their captivity when they had truly repented of their manifold sins. "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee; and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children, with all thy heart and all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return, and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence he will fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee unto the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it, and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live; and the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return, and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day‡."

The Nazarenes bring, as a reproach against our nation, that which we consider the glory of our holy law. They say, that our dispersion upon the face of the earth is the mark of reprobation. But that unity of conformity to our law, which we have preserved; that simplicity in the essential articles of our religion, which neither time nor misfortune, nor the difference of climate could ever alter; are they not evident proofs of the majesty and truth of our holy law? Confusion, disorder, and change are the lot of human inventions; stability and confidence, the marks of the finger of God.

* Lev. vii. 35.

† Ibid. xxiii. 41.

‡ Deut. iv. 25—30.

An English author, in the beginning of the last century, offered the following two problems respecting our nation, and called for their solution upon the learned of all parties. But they have never been satisfactorily answered:

FIRST PROBLEM.

Whether, without having recourse to miracles, or to promises drawn from the Old Testament, it can be demonstrated by the intrinsic constitution of the government or religion of the Jews, how, after the total subversion of their state, for almost seventeen hundred years, and after the dispersion of their nation over the whole habitable earth; being neither favoured nor supported by any potentate, but rather exposed to the contempt and hatred of all the world, they have nevertheless preserved themselves a distinct people, with all their ancient rites, excepting a very small number of ceremonies they were necessarily enjoined to practice within the bounds of Judea, and which they are no longer permitted to do? While that, in the mean time, the institutions of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans, (nations that were much more powerful) are long ago entirely abolished and brought to nothing; and that the names only of certain celebrated religions subsist yet in history, without even so much as the names remaining of some other worships, that doubtless were neither less believed, nor less extended.

SECOND PROBLEM.

Whether a sufficient reason can be assigned, drawn from the nature and frame of the Jewish republic or religion (without alleging miracles or promises not accounted miraculous as aforesaid) why, during the time that they were the independent lords of their own country, and that their government subsisted in a flourishing condition, they were perpetually inclined to the most gross idolatries, always in suspense whether they should follow Baal or Jehovah, and having a strong propensity to mix or marry with the women of other nations contrary to their fundamental laws? Whereas, since their actual dispersion among these same nations, they are obstinately careful to keep their race entire, without corruption or mixture; and that, notwithstanding the most agreeable temptations, or the most exquisite tortures, they abhor, beyond all expression, idolatry of every kind, but particularly the adoration of dead men, (from which they are evi-

dently exempt) as they are surprisingly uniform in their worship and doctrine, which is not denied by any body*.

In a society, composed of so many bishops and priests, profoundly learned in Nazarene controversy as that of the "Ameliorating" Association, it cannot be doubted, dear Isaacs, that some one will be found capable of resolving problems, which have, for so long a period, puzzled and baffled the united efforts of all the Nazarene doctors in Europe.

May the God of our fathers bless you with plenty, comfort, and a numerous race.

NATHAN JOSEPH.

LETTER IX.

First meeting of the Ameliorating Society—Address of their President, the Hon. Elias Boudinot.

DEAR ISAACS,

THE Nazarene "Ameliorating" Society held their first annual meeting in this place, on the 12th of May last, at which an address was delivered by the Hon. Elias Boudinot, their president. As this address has been since published, under the authority of the Society, it may be considered as containing a declaration of their religious opinions, or the creed which they profess to believe. Viewing it in that light, I intend, for your further information, dear Isaacs, to make some remarks on the system which it holds out to our nation, as worthy of their reception; not that I entertain a single doubt as to the stability of any of our race, but to shew the ridiculous folly of those who can suppose, that any one accustomed to think, and who has not been brought up with their prejudices, should adopt tenets so subversive of every rational idea that can be entertained of the Almighty, and so hostile to what constitutes true happiness. That you may perceive I do ample justice to this Society, I shall quote those parts of the address, which I mean to review, and which more immediately illustrates the points of faith professed by the Nazarenes.

"Brethren and Fellow-Citizens,

"When I look round this respectable assembly, and consider the special purpose of our meeting, it is with confidence I say, that we are indeed arrived at an age of wonders, and

* Toland's Nazarenus, London, 1718, App. p. 3,

that the ways of God are in the great deep. An astonished world are with surprise looking on us at this day, and watching every step we take.

"It is not more than 1800 years ago, that our glorified Immanuel, the long promised Messiah of Moses and the prophets—the Prince of peace—was walking in the streets of Jerusalem, the city of the great King, and beginning to preach 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand; repent and believe in the Lord Jesus as your expected Messiah, who has brought life and immortality to light through his Gospel.' But alas! He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

"While contemned by the Jews, and set at nought, by the rulers of his people—while a manger was his cradle, and a stable his only cover, wise men, or kings, from the east, came from a remote distance in Asia, far beyond the Jewish territory, and acknowledged him to be born king of the Jews, and did obeisance to him; worshipping and presenting him with gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, after the manner of the kings of Asia. He was hailed as the Messiah by Simeon, and publicly acknowledged by John the Baptist, who was received as a prophet from God by all parties: and finally by a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' In the course of his ministry on earth, he did works that no other man ever did. He healed the sick; he gave eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; he cleansed the lepers; he commanded the elements, and they obeyed him: in fine, he raised the dead, and commanded evil spirits, and they came out of the possessed, confessing that he was the Son of God. He conferred miraculous powers on his disciples and followers. And, during a life of poverty and want, he spoke with certainty of his hereafter sitting upon the throne of his glory, where his apostles should likewise set on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. He predicted his being betrayed by one of his family unto the chief priests and the scribes, and that they should condemn him to death for blasphemy, and should deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock, to scourge, and to crucify him; and that on the third day thereafter, he should arise from the dead, and ascend to glory, after which the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

"During the abode of the divine Saviour on earth, he underwent an almost constant and cruel persecution by the Jewish government. Every thing foretold of his sufferings,

and more than brutal treatment, as well as what he had predicted of himself, and the then nation of the Jews, came literally to pass.

"He was apprehended as a malefactor, and brought before the Sanhedrim; charged with blasphemy; arraigned before the Gentile governor, who, after a strict examination, declared that he could not find any fault in him, and urged the releasing him: but the chief priests and people, representing the whole nation of the Jews, alarmed Pilate with Cæsar's vengeance, by assuring him Jesus had said that he was king of the Jews, but they had no king but Cæsar; thus judicially casting off all obedience and allegiance to their great Prince Messiah. And even after Pilate was desirous of releasing him instead of Barabbas, a robber and murderer, they persisted in demanding vociferously that he should be crucified; unanimously calling for the guilt of his blood to be upon them and their children. Whereupon the cowardly governor meanly delivered an innocent man, by his own confession, to their unbridled rage, to be crucified; which was done accordingly, agreeably to, and in fulfilment of, his own prediction, and that of their sacred writings. His burial, resurrection from the dead, and his appearance to his disconsolate disciples, followed for forty days, teaching them all things respecting his future kingdom, and then he ascended to glory.

"His apostles and followers immediately proceeded to preach the Gospel of his kingdom—salvation and eternal life through his name—to a guilty world; while the nation, mortified by the glorious success attending their labours, began, and carried on, a most cruel and bloody persecution against them."

Farewell, dear Isaacs; may every thing in which you are engaged abundantly prosper in your hands.

NATHAN JOSEPH.

LETTER X.

Did the person called Jesus of Nazareth ever exist?

DEAR ISAACS,

BEFORE entering upon an investigation of the particular dogmas of the Nazarene religion, there are two points of considerable importance which require consideration: first, is it clear that the person called Jesus of Nazareth really

existed? Secondly, are the books which the Nazarenes say contain the true particulars of the life and maxims of the founder of their sect, genuine, well authenticated writings?

You will, perhaps, think with me, dear Isaacs, that if these questions are not answered in the affirmative, the whole Nazarene system must fall to the ground. If, indeed, there is reason to believe that the person whom they call the Messiah never appeared on the earth, and that the books containing his history are fabrications, it is impossible that any one, persuaded of these facts, can be "desirous to receive Christian instruction" at the hands of men, however respectable their rank in life, who attempt to rear a fabric upon so weak a foundation.

How could the learned of our nation defend themselves against the attacks of Infidels, who might deny that our Legislature Moses ever existed, if the fact was not established by other evidence than what is contained in our sacred books? How should these books themselves have met with so favourable a reception, if the leading truths which they contain had not been corroborated by the united testimony of that ancient Egyptian writer, Manathon; of Chæremón of Greece, as also by Lysimachus, Appion, Diodorus Siculus, and Tacitus? Even the history of our people by Josephus would have met with no favour, if he could not have adduced the greater part of these authorities in support of his statements. To our forefathers, who lived in the days of Moses, there wanted no additional evidence to satisfy them of the divine authority of our legislator; but such as were ignorant of the existence of our holy law, and of the mighty wonders which Jehovah had performed for his chosen people, could not be expected to give credence to these things without the concurring testimony in their favour of writers no way connected with our nation, and who had no visible interest in admitting or denying its great antiquity.

How very different, dear Isaacs, is the evidence brought forward by the Nazarenes to establish the existence of the founder of their religion. Four unlettered and interested men of our nation "pass for the faithful authors of Memoirs containing the life of Jesus-Christ; and it is on their testimony that Christians believe themselves bound to receive the religion they profess, and adopt, without examination, the most contradictory facts, the most incredible actions, the most amazing prodigies, the most unconnected system, the most unintelligible doctrine, and the most revolting

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mysteries."* Surely, if, as the Nazarene "Ameliorating Society" assert, three kings came from the east, guided by a star, and worshipped Jesus; if, at his birth, Herod and all Jerusalem was so "troubled" as to order the massacre of all the infant children in Bethlehem; if Jesus so openly restored the blind to sight, and raised people from the dead; if he was crucified, and, at the time of his death, the sun was totally eclipsed, the earth quaked, and the dead who were in their graves came forth, and walked publicly through the streets of Jerusalem; surely, I say, if all these most extraordinary and wonderful events, together with the resurrection of Jesus himself from the dead, took place, as is said, in open day, and in sight of thousands of the Roman people, besides many of our nation, it would have been impossible to have prevented the former, at least, from placing on record events of so notorious and unheard of a nature. Were it even acceded to the Nazarenes, that our forefathers had reasons for overlooking altogether the person of Jesus, it cannot be imagined that a Roman historian, like Tacitus, who has in so convincing a manner demonstrated the antiquity of our nation, and who could have no possible interest in concealing the truth, would have entirely overlooked these astonishing occurrences, if they had really taken place. Yet Tacitus has not only taken no notice of them, but even, as to the *person* called Jesus, whom the Nazarenes worship, his history is wholly silent.

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With regard to Josephus, I can see no reason to suppose that he, any more than Tacitus, would have wilfully neglected to notice Jesus in his writings. Our historian faithfully records a thousand events which occurred among our nation of much less importance than the most trifling miracle said to have been performed by Jesus. He even details, with no sparing hand, the numerous crimes of which Herod was accused. But, from beginning to end of the "History of the Jews," there is not one word to be found respecting the Messiah of the Christians, of the massacre of the innocents, of the three kings, or of the other wonderful events said to have occurred during his life-time. Aware of the formidable and unanswerable objection arising from this silence, the Nazarenes attempted to get over it by inserting a passage, which they forged, into the text of Josephus, by which they wished to make it appear, not only

* Ecce Homo, Introd. p. 9.

that he actually recognised the person of Jesus, but that he entertained a high opinion of his character. The forgery, however, was detected, and has been ably exposed by Blondel, L'Abbe de Longuerus, and other good critics. !!!

Besides the histories of Tacitus and Josephus, we have the numerous works of Philo, who wrote in the Apostolic age, in which there is not the slightest allusion to Jesus of Nazareth, nor to any of the opinions said to have been maintained by his followers.

Can it be expected, dear Isaacs, that a system offered to the consideration of our nation, so defective in its most essential features, should engage the attention of a single individual among us? Had only one cotemporary and disinterested writer been named, who merely spoke of Jesus as a person of whose existence there was no doubt, I should, for one, have been "desirous to receive Christian instruction;" but when there is a total absence of all rational proof, as to a point of such vast importance, I feel myself bound to reject the whole as a fable. !!!

Nor can it be said that the existence of Jesus is as well attested as any fact in profane history, because we believe in the existence of Scipio, of Cæsar, and of Alexander, on the testimony of innumerable disinterested historians, who have asserted the fact; but when Titus Livius, and other writers, speak of miracles having been performed, we reject these as improbable events. The case is very different with the Messiah of the Nazarenes. No writers but those who were interested, have recorded any thing respecting him, and the books which it is pretended they have written, are filled with accounts of wonders and of marvellous events, which it is impossible for any man in his senses to believe.

Adieu, dear Isaacs; live comfortably and happy.

NATHAN JOSEPH.

LETTER XI.

On the Authenticity of the Gospels, and other Nazarene Books.

DEAR ISAACS,

Is it not remarkable, that, if such a personage as the Nazarene Messiah ever existed, he should have neglected so important and necessary a precaution as that of leaving behind him a written account of his doctrines, so that none might

be mistaken as to what should constitute the true articles of the Nazarene creed. Into what a state of darkness and uncertainty would our nation have been plunged, had not the laws of God, given to Moses, been fairly written out, and handed down through all generations, for our guidance in the ways of truth. It does not even appear, from any part of the Nazarene books, that their pretended legislator gave any instructions to his followers to record the events of his life.

While this, for them, unfortunate omission, goes far to shew his non-existence, it is a circumstance which sufficiently accounts for the numerous and contradictory Gospels and histories of Jesus that appeared in the early part of the Christian era. Modern Nazarenes content themselves with only four of these Gospels, which, however, were not declared canonical till about three hundred years after the period in which Jesus is said to have been put to death.

The fact is, dear Isaacs, that previous to this time, as appears from ecclesiastical history, the Nazarenes were divided into numerous sects and parties, each having a Gospel or other book, which they pretended were written by an apostle or disciple of Jesus, in which the doctrine that distinguished them from the other sects held a prominent place. I have now before me a list of those books, amounting to upwards of seventy, which a celebrated author of the last century*, ascertained to have once existed, by the evidence of the Nazarene fathers, who frequently quoted them in their writings, but which are now destroyed. Among these early writings, I find a Gospel attributed to each of the following Nazarenes: Peter, Andrew, James, Bartholomew, Philip, Thomas, Thaddeus, Matthias, Paul, and Barnabas; another Gospel of John and of Mark, with numerous Epistles, books of the Nativity, doctrines, preachings, liturgies, itineraries, judgments, acts, memorials, traditions, passions, visions, narratives, precepts, and revelations. In this curious list, there are no less than eight books attributed to Mary, one of which is entitled, "The Book of the Virgin Mary and her Midwife," and another, "The Book of Mary concerning the Miracles of Christ, and the Ring of King Solomon." Jesus, also, was believed to have been the author of seven books or tracts, one of which, it is said, he "dropped down from heaven."

* Toland's Defence of the Life of Milton.

It is evident, says the author of *Ecce Homo*, that among the first Christian doctors there was a great number of pious forgers, who, to make their cause prevail, framed and forged Gospels, legends, romances, oracles of Sybils, and other works, of which the imposture and folly were so striking, that the Church itself has been forced to reject them. To be convinced of this, we have only to cast our eyes on the work entitled, "*Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, published by J. A. Fabricius at Hamburgh, 1719*." We find Theodoret affirming, that he removed about two hundred Gospels from the public churches, because they wanted the genealogy of Jesus, and put other Gospels in their place. The celebrated Henry Dodwell says, that it was not till the reign of Trajan, or indeed of Hadrian, that a collection of the books of the New Testament was publicly made, the priests having, previous to that time, concealed them in the archives of their churches†. Iræneus, alluding to these primitive forgeries, says, that "in order to amaze the simple, and such as are ignorant of the Scriptures of truth, they obtrude upon them an inexpressible multitude of apocryphal and spurious Scriptures of their own devising‡."

The confusion, disorder, and mischief which arose in these early times, in consequence of the prevalence of such a mass of romances, all claiming divine authority, were greatly increased by the conduct of those, who, not content with forging books, and palming them on the world as genuine, made no hesitation in corrupting and interpolating the text of other books belonging to their opponents. Origen, so early as the third century, loudly complained of these corruptions:—"What shall we say (observes he) of the errors of transcribers, and of the impious temerity with which they have corrupted the text? What shall we say of the license of those, who promiscuously interpolate or erase at pleasure?"

In the midst of such a number and variety of contradictory books, how was it possible to discover the good from the bad; the genuine from those which were forged? And if this important point was so difficult to ascertain at a period so near the time when the events recorded in these books were said to have taken place, by what rule can it now be ascertained, after the lapse of nearly twenty centuries? Even the first Nazarene fathers had no rule to guide

* *Ecce Homo*, Introd. p. 11.

† Dodwell's Dissert. p. 66.

‡ Iræneus *Adversus Hæres.* l. 3. c. 17.

them in this matter; for we find many of them, particularly Iræneus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and Tertulian, frequently quoting from, and referring to books which were then denominated "Scripture," and "divinely inspired writings," that are now no longer extant.

!!!
In the Appendix to the History of the famous Council of Nice, composed of all the bishops and priests of the Nazarene sects, and called together by the Emperor Constantine the Great, in the year 325 of the Nazarene era, we have a particular account of the settling of the present canon of the New Testament, which I shall send you shortly, in the words of the author of Ecce Homo, and add thereto some circumstances, as to the character of this celebrated council, not noticed by that writer.

Farewell, dear Isaacs, may you live content and happy.

NATHAN JOSEPH.

LETTER XII.

History of the Council of Nice—farther Reflections on the Authenticity and Corruptions of the Nazarene Books.

DEAR ISAACS,

THE following is the history, which I promised you in my last, of the famous Council of Nice, in so far as it respects the canon of the Nazarene Scriptures:

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"It is well known, that among some fifty gospels, with which Christianity in its commencement was inundated, the church assembled in council at Nice chose four of them only, and rejected the rest as apocryphal, although the latter had nothing more ridiculous in them than those which were admitted. Thus, at the end of three centuries, (*i. e.* in the three hundred and twenty-fifth year of the Christian era) some bishops decided, that these four gospels were the only ones which ought to be adopted, or which had been really inspired by the Holy Ghost. A miracle enabled them to discover this important truth, so difficult to be discerned at a time, even then, not very remote from that of the apostles! He placed, it is said, promiscuously, books apocryphal and authentic, under an altar:—the fathers of the council betook themselves to prayer, in order to obtain of the Lord, that he would permit the false or doubtful books to remain *under* the altar, whilst those which were truly inspired by the Holy Ghost, should place themselves above

it—a circumstance which did not fail to occur!—It is then on this miracle that our faith depends! It is to it that Christians owe the assurance of possessing the true gospels, or faithful memoirs of the life of Christ! It is from these only they are permitted to deduce the principles of their belief, and the rules of conduct which they ought to observe, in order to obtain eternal salvation*.”

I am told that the Nazarene sect, called Protestants, disbelieve the miracle said to have been performed in favour of the authenticity of the four gospels, while they admit the fact, that these gospels were not adopted, as the only genuine books, till the council of Nice determined that question. Independent, however, of the miracle, it is certain, that the members composing the council were the most unfit persons on earth to decide in a matter of such importance, and that it was through the influence of Constantine, that the present sacred canon of the Nazarenes was finally settled. Before the Roman emperor interposed his authority in this affair, the bishops, on each side, had succeeded in interesting the people in their disputes, and had worked up their minds to such a pitch of *rage*, that they *attacked*, *fought*, and *murdered* each other, and in other respects, *acted as madmen*, and committed the *grossest impieties*, for the sake of orthodoxy†.

Sozomen informs us, in his Ecclesiastical History‡, that many of these bishops came to the council to negotiate their *own private affairs*, and to obtain redress of grievances, by *accusing* other bishops who had *injured* them. Eusebius says§, that some came to the council with *worldly views of gain*; and Theodoret adds, that others were *subtle* and *crafty*, and of a *quartelling malicious temper*, and actuated with a spirit of *revenge*. Sabinus tells us||, that they were generally a set of *very ignorant* men, and *destitute of knowledge and learning*.

Theodoret further states¶, that when the Arian party proposed, in writing, the form of faith they had drawn up, those who opposed them, no sooner read it, but they immediately *tore it to pieces*, calling it a *spurious* and *false* confession; and, after they had filled the place with *noise* and *confusion*, universally accused the Arians of *betraying the truth*—of being *worse than heretics, infidels, or atheists*.

* Ecce Homo, Introd. p. 12.

† Soz. Ecl. Hist. l. 1. c. 17.

|| Soc. Ecl. Hist. l. 1. c. 9.

† Euseb. Vit. Const. l. 3. c. 4, 5.

§ Theod. Ecl. Hist. l. 3. c. 7, 11.

¶ Theod. Ecl. Hist. l. 1. c. 7.

Eusebius adds*, that when they were met in council, they immediately began *wrangling* and *quarrelling*, and could not be appeased or brought to temper, till Constantine interposed—artfully persuading some, *shaming* others into *silence*, and *highly commending those who spoke agreeably to his sentiments*. Thus, with a spirit of deadly hatred rankling in their breasts against each other, did these men assemble together, to decide on the authority of the gospels, and other points of Nazarene faith. “Tumultuous clamours made this unintelligible decision pass, and converted it into a sacred dogma, notwithstanding the reclamations of opponents, who were silenced by treating them as blasphemers and heretics. The priests who had the strongest lungs, declared themselves *orthodox*. The emperor, little acquainted with the ground of the quarrel, ranged himself for the time on their side, and quitted it afterwards, according as he thought proper to lend an ear, sometimes to the bishops of one party, and sometimes to those of another.”

* Euseb. Vit. Const. l. 3. c. 13.

(To be continued.)

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